

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03406 111957Z

67

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-19

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6761

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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USMISSION USUN NY

AMEMOMISY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3406

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI UR XO

SUBJ: SOVIET ATTITUDE ON INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES

REF: STATE 46715

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET PRESS HAS GIVEN PROMINENCE TO
PM DIRECTOR WEISS' TESTIMONY ON INDIAN OCEAN,
FINDING FRESH EVIDENCE OF PEKIWXU ALLEGED TACIT
SUPPORT FOR DEIGO CARCIA. COMPREHENSIVE DISCUSSION
OF INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES IN MARCH 8 NEW TIMES SUGGESTS
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03406 111957Z

THAT MOSCOW WISHES TO DEFLECT AMBITIOUS PEACE ZONE PROPOSALS BY LITTORAL STATES WHICH MIGHT IMPINGE ON SOVIETS' OWN PRESENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. TESTIMONY OF PM DIRECTOR SEYMOUR WEISS ON DIEGO GARCIA BEFORE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE IS REPORTED PROMINENTLY IN PRAVDA MARCH 9. TASS ITEM IS PLACED BESIDE REPORT OF SECRETARY'S TRADE BILL TESTIMONY AND GIVEN EQUAL SPACE. LEAD PARAGRAPH REPORTS ENTRY OF KITTY HAWK INTO INDIAN OCEAN, WHILE REMAINDER REPLAYS WEISS' ENUMERATION OF U.S. INTERESTS IN REGION AND HIS MENTION OF DIPLOMATIC LEVERAGE GAINED FROM BASE. IT SAYS HE ACKNOWLEDGED CRITICAL REACTIONS OF LITTORAL STATES INCLUDING INDIA, SRI LANKA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, BUT NOTES HIS STATEMENT THAT OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE PRIVATELY ASSURED U.S. OF FAVORABLE ATTITUDE. LATTER CATEGORY INCLUDES CHINA.

3. NEW TIMES MARCH 8 OFFERS COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT OF INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES IN ARTICLE BY V. PAVLOVSKIY AND YU. TIMILIN. AFTER REVIEWING BACKGROUND OF U.S.-UK AGREEMENT, ARTICLE LINKS DIEGO GARCIA BASE TO U.S. "GREAT OCEAN STRATEGY." IT CLAIMS PEKING HAS INTEREST IN EXPANDING ITS NAVY AND REPEATS CANDID ABOUT PARALLEL BETWEEN DIEGO GARCIA DECISION AND PRC NAVAL SHOW OF FORCE IN PARACELS.

4. WHILE IT BERATES THE WEST AND PEKING FOR BUILDING OR DREAMING OF INDIAN OCEAN PRESENCE, ARTICLE CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTS ARGUMENT FOR SOVIET PRESENCE. IT POINTS OUT THAT INDIAN OCEAN IS ONLY ICE-FREE ROUTE BETWEEN SOVIET WESTERN AND EASTERN PORTS, WHICH AN EXPANDED WESTERN NAVAL PRESENCE COULD PLACE IN JEOPARDY. IN APPARENT EFFORT TO DISPEL ANY EXAGGERATION OF SOVIET POSITION ON INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE (IOPZ), ARTICLE DUTIFULLY QUOTES BREZNEV-GANDHI JOINT DECLARATION BUT ALSO IMPLIES SOVIET UNHAPPINESS OVER TENDENCY IN LAST UNGA TO LINK IOPZ WITH LIMITATION ON FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION. IT PRAISES APPROACH OF INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH IN FEBRUARY ISSUE OF JOURNAL "ROUND TABLE," WHERE HE WRITES THAT IOPZ MUST BE STUDIED IN CONTEXT OF ENSURING SECURITY IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 03406 111957Z

ASIA. IT ASSERTS THAT REALIZATION OF GENUINE PEACE ZONE IN INDIAN OCEAN WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON COURSE OF EVENT.

5. COMMENT: HIGH SOVIET INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES APPEARS TO BE A FUNCTION NOT ONLY OF U.S.-SOVIET NAVAL AND STRATEGIC RIVALRY BUT OF LONG-RANGE SOVIET POLITICAL GOALS IN ASIA. IN PARTICULAR, SOVIETS SEEM TO

FEEL THEIR ACCESS TO INDIAN OCEAN IS IMPORTANT FACTOR
IN THEIR ABILITY TO DEAL WITH CHINA. NEW TIMES ARTICLE
SUGGESTS SOVIETS MAY BE A BIT CONCERNED ABOUT INCLINATION
OF MANY LITTORAL STATES TO OUST ALL MAJOR NAVAL POWERS
FROM INDIAN OCEAN.
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